

Weymouth Rural District Council.



ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

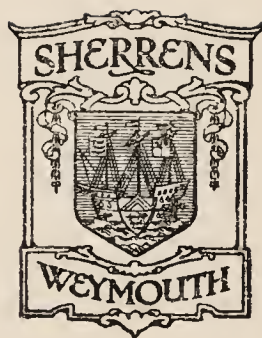
FOR THE YEAR ENDING

31ST DECEMBER, 1914.

WM. HAWKINS, M.R.C.S.,

Medical Officer of Health,

"Hillfield," Broadway, Dorchester.



To the
Rural District Council of Weymouth.

4th March, 1915.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to lay before you my Report for the year 1914, under the headings suggested by the Medical Officer of Health for the County of Dorset.

The area of the District in acres is 29,005.

PHYSICAL FEATURES.

The district lies on the South Coast facing the Sea, and is situated in an undulating valley with low hills, sheltered from the North by a range of limestone hills between four and six hundred feet high. From these hills several streams of good water flow to the sea, and the larger villages are situated on the streams.

The climate is very good; sunshine compares favourably with any of the South Coast resorts, and the sea breezes from the English Channel are very invigorating; the average rainfall is about 35 inches, but the past year has been an exceptionally wet one, about 45 inches.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS AND CHIEF OCCUPATIONS.

The population is chiefly agricultural, with some market gardening and fishing, the women doing a great deal of laundry work for the neighbouring Borough. There are some large villages, that of Wyke Regis being almost a town. Here there is a large factory for making torpedoes, which employs at the present time about 1,200 men.

POOR LAW RELIEF AND GRATUITOUS MEDICAL RELIEF.

The amount of Poor Law Relief in this District compares favourably with most other Unions, being less in quantity, and is gradually diminishing; but the same cannot be said for gratuitous medical relief, which is very liberal and does not decrease in the same ratio.

WATER SUPPLY.

Throughout the whole of the district the water supply may be considered adequate and sufficient.

Several of the villages have piped services, and are supplied with water by either private or public undertakings. The undermentioned villages are so supplied.

Villages supplied by the Weymouth Waterworks Company — Wyke Regis, Preston and Sutton Poyntz, Chickerell, Broadwey, and a portion of Upwey; the remaining portion of Upwey is supplied by mains recently laid down by the Council, and the water is drawn from the Waterworks of the Portland Urban District Council. This supply is already a great benefit to the inhabitants of this part of the village.

The village of Portesham is supplied by a piped service. This was laid down to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria, the expense being met by Public Subscription, and the Scheme was placed under control of the Parish Council.

The hamlet of Buckland Rippers is still dependant on the old spring. This is not sufficient in the summer time ; the Rural District Council have for some time past been endeavouring to get a better supply laid on, but owing to legal difficulties the Council have not yet been successful. Negotiations are still in progress regarding the above question.

The villages of Langton Herring, Abbotsbury and Osmington have piped services, supplied by private enterprise. These supplies are sufficient and carefully attended to.

The smaller villages within the district are supplied by springs and deep wells ; these are satisfactory.

RIVERS AND STREAMS.

The only river of importance in the district is the river Wey. This flows through Upwey, Broadwey and Radipole, and discharges into the Weymouth Backwater. There are smaller streams in some of the other villages.

Pollution of these streams may be considered very slight and every care is taken to prevent such pollution, which arises at times from the various premises abutting on the said streams, and in other cases from the existence of old overflow drains ; the Council will not allow the waste water from any new premises to be discharged into these streams. This was a frequent source of pollution in past years.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

The only village with a modern and complete drainage system is the village of Wyke Regis. This scheme was completed in the year 1902 and has proved a success, especially in view of the fact that at the present time the sewers are receiving the waste and surface water drainage from the Hutment Camp near Wyke Farm, with about 1,000 men in occupation thereof; also the population of the village is considerably increased by the number of troops at present billeted in the dwellings.

The other villages are not drained, but provided with cesspools, etc.; these are generally kept satisfactorily and very few complaints are received as to nuisances arising therefrom. That these villages are sanitary generally, may be ascertained from the fact that for the past five years only 75 cases of infectious diseases have occurred within the whole of the rural district.

The other villages collect and use their refuse on the land and gardens. Very few complaints are received in respect to this work not being satisfactory; the occupiers generally recognise the value of such refuse as manure for the gardens and allotments.

The Council have no Refuse Destructor in the district.

CLOSET ACCOMMODATION.

This may be considered satisfactory throughout the district.

Approximate number of water closets	..	811
Ditto earth closets	..	919
Ditto privies	..	475
Number converted into w.c.'s during the		
year	..	2
Number converted to earth closets during		
the year	..	4

SCAVENGING.

Scavenging is only undertaken in one village within the Rural District—Wyke Regis.

This work is let off by contract, the collections being made twice weekly. The refuse is carted away to a farm and used as manure, the waste paper, etc., being burnt.

Since the troops have occupied this village, the collection of refuse has been made daily. This was done at the request of the Military authorities, but is not necessary at normal times.

The other villages carry out their own scavenging, which is collected by the occupiers of the various premises and used on the gardens and allotments.

The Council do not undertake the emptying of cesspools or privies in any portion of the district; the occupiers do this work themselves and treat the contents thereof for use as manure for the gardens, as above.

Complaints are very rare in respect to the above work, or the neglect of emptying such when occasion requires.

The Council have no refuse destructor within their district.

SANITARY INSPECTIONS BY MEDICAL OFFICER
OF HEALTH OF THE DISTRICT.

Inspections are usually made in conjunction with the Sanitary Inspector, and the information is contained in his report. The following information was noted by the Medical Officer.

Dwelling-houses inspected	..	..	62
Schools	..	..	5
Bakehouses	..	:	9
Slaughter-houses	..	..	14
Dairy and Cowsheds	..	..	23

In addition to the above a great many of the dwellings in which troops have been billeted were inspected to ascertain if such premises were suitable, and with a view to ascertaining if the premises were kept clean and satisfactory ; very few matters required attention in the above premises.

DEFECTS OR NUISANCES FOUND IN DWELLINGS.

Dampness in walls	..	..	..	4
Windows not made to open on top	..		..	6
Overcrowding	..	..	..	5
Cleansing necessary	..	..	..	11
Drains defective	..	..	..	2
General repairs	..	..	..	7
Vaults or privies requiring to be emptied	..		..	3
Refuse to be removed away from premises	..		..	2

SLAUGHTER HOUSES.

Limewashing necessary	..	..	..	3
Floors requiring attention	..		..	1
Drains ditto	..	..	..	2

DAIRY SHEDS.

Yards and shed, imperfect drainage	..		..	2
Floors requiring attention	..		..	2
Limewashing necessary	..	..	..	5
Manure to be removed	..	..	..	1

All the above works received attention, and were executed to the satisfaction of the Inspector.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF DISTRICT.

(MR. GEO. A. ANDREWS, A.R.S.I., Sanitary Inspector.)

Number of inspections	..	..	..	719
Cowsheds, etc.	..	..	..	82
Workshops, etc.	..	..	..	51
Schools	..	..	..	5
Slaughter-houses	..	..	..	36
Bakehouses	..	..	..	23
Dwellings	..	..	..	266
Sundry premises and Sewage works, Camps, etc.	..	..	..	228
Informal notices sent out	..		..	104
Formal ditto.	..	..	..	5
Complaints received	..	..	..	19

WORKS FOUND NECESSARY AND CARRIED OUT.

Limewashing of premises	..	..	12
General repairs, roofs, etc.	..	..	9
Drains stopped and cleared	..	..	7
Drains put into repair	..	..	15
Re-drainage and new drains	..	..	22
New W.C.'s	..	..	17
W.C.'s supplied with water	..	..	19
Drains tested (old)	..	..	13
Tests of new drains	..	..	28
Vaults and cesspools emptied after notice	..	..	12
Cesspools new	..	..	5
Vaults and cesspools disused	..	..	5
E.C.'s in lieu of privies	..	..	4
E.C.'s put into repair	..	..	11
Ditches, etc., cleansed	..	..	13
Premises generally cleansed	..	..	16
Premises overcrowded (and abated)	..	..	5
Premises supplied with water	..	..	31

PREMISES DISINFECTED AFTER INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Scarlet Fever	..	..	..	..	10
Diphtheria	..	..	..	..	5
Enteric Fever	..	..	..	..	3
Consumption	..	..	..	..	4
Cancer	..	..	..	..	1
Schools	..	..	..	..	2

SLAUGHTER HOUSES, COWSHEDS.

Limewashing necessary	..	..	..	7
Drainage repaired or cleared	..	..	..	3
Floors, etc., repaired	..	..	..	3
New floors	..	..	..	3
Removal of Manure	..	..	..	7

Note.—Owing to the formation of several Camps within the district since the commencement of the War, the work of removal of the nightsoil and refuse therefrom was handed over to the Council. This entailed a considerable amount of time to be given to this question, and the work was and is still being carried out for the Council by various Contractors, directly under the control of the Inspector, and very few complaints have been received from the Army authorities in respect to this work. Some little difficulty was experienced at first in procuring proper carts for the work; this is now being done with proper carts and giving satisfaction.

In Wyke Regis village a large number of troops were billeted. The various premises have been inspected from time to time, and instructions given to the occupiers to exercise great care in keeping the premises clean, and that no accumulation of house refuse was allowed to remain to become a nuisance. The health of the troops within this district at this time was very good.

PREMISES CONTROLLABLE BY BYELAWS.

We have no common lodging houses nor offensive trades. There is one van dweller at Charlestown, and some tents along the coast during the summer months.

SCHOOLS.

The schools in the district may be considered satisfactory, both as regards the premises and the sanitary arrangements, and all the buildings have an efficient water supply—with the exception of Buckland Rippers school, referred to on an earlier page of this Report. Upwey and Broadwey schools were cleansed and disinfected during the summer months.

MILK SUPPLY.

The milk trade may be considered satisfactory throughout the district, and the quality of milk produced very good.

Frequent inspections of the cattle and premises are made, especially during the period of milking. Any animal suspected of being tuberculous is at once noted and a Veterinary Surgeon called in to inspect and confirm the state of health of the animal in question. The cattle, on the whole, are well selected and carefully kept.

DAIRIES AND COWSHEDS.

There are 53 registered cowkeepers, dairymen, purveyors of milk on the register, as follows:—

Cowkeepers	..	..	..	..	41
Dairymen	..	..	..	..	9
Purveyors of Milk	..	..	..	..	3
Cowsheds in use	..	..	..	..	49
Number of Milkshops in the district	..	..	..	..	14

The regulations as to the above premises are carefully observed, and few complaints have been made during the year.

The premises, on the whole, bear favourable comparison with other districts. A number of the buildings are of the old type usually found in country districts, but considerable improvements have been made since the adoption of the Act.

Since the formation of sundry Camps within the District, the Special Sanitary Officer appointed by the Army to maintain the health of the troops in the Camps, with the Inspector visited several of the above premises situated near the Camps. Several improvements suggested by him have been considered by the Council, and notices sent out for the work to be carried out. This at the present time is not easily done, owing to the loss of labour by the farmers, including their horses, carts and men now working for the Government. but every effort will be made to do such work in due course. At the same time the question of making all these premises model dairies is a very serious item for both landlord and tenant.

A number of the smaller men simply rent occupation land, and have to provide their own cowsheds, etc. They are not able to expend considerable sums of money for this purpose, and to erect permanent expensive buildings on land let under short terms cannot be expected. Every care is taken to keep such premises reasonably sweet and clean, and taken on the whole, the buildings are average with any other part of the county.

BAKEHOUSES.

The number of Bakehouses in the district is 13; these premises are well kept, and in a great many cases are of recent construction.

The limewashing and cleansing of these buildings are most carefully observed.

FOOD INSPECTION.

The various premises for the sale of and storage of food are properly kept, and no complaints have been received during the year.

There are now five butchers' shops within the district, two of which are for Foreign meat only. They are well kept and clean.

No carcases or portions thereof have been condemned during the past year.

REPORT UNDER SALE OF FOOD AND DRUGS ACT.

The following is a statement of the samples taken in your district and sent for analysis during the year 1914.

Formal Samples and number of each—

Butter ..	..	..	..	..	I
Castor Oil	..	..	..	..	I
Milk ..	..	..	..	..	I
Sago ..	..	..	..	..	I

Sample of milk found adulterated; cautioned by Chief Constable. Sample of sago found adulterated; cautioned by Chief Constable.

SLAUGHTER-HOUSES.

The number of slaughter-houses within the district now is 8 ; these are well kept and properly limewashed. Two of the above are only used occasionally.

Frequent inspections are made by the Medical Officer and Inspector ; the usual time of visiting is when killing is in progress, and the carcasses are inspected by them for disease. During the past year it was not found necessary to condemn any carcasses.

HOUSING.

The housing accommodation, with very few exceptions, throughout the whole of the district may be considered satisfactory and adequate. The villages, with the exception of Wyke Regis, Broadwey, Upwey, and Chickerell, are not very modern, but the various premises are clean and well kept, and repairs are willingly executed upon request or instruction to the owners.

The above-mentioned villages contain a great many houses of more recent contruction.

At the present time in Wyke Regis houses are in very great demand ; this is due to the increased activity at the Whitehead Torpedo Works. During the past year four new houses have been completed and three others erected.

At Broadwey three new dwellings have been erected during the past year. These are buildings that cannot be classed as houses for the working classes, and are now occupied by the owners.

At Preston the cottages have in a great many cases been renovated and rendered more satisfactory. The demand for new houses in this village is not very pressing.

All new buildings are now subject to the Byelaws and Regulations of the Council ; this is a step in the right direction. The buildings erected since the adoption of such Byelaws are very satisfactory in every respect.

The above-mentioned Byelaws have been approved by the Local Government Board.

ACTION UNDER 1909 ACT, HOUSING AND TOWN PLANNING ACT.

The following inspections have been make by your Inspector, occasionally in company with the Medical Officer of Health.

Premises inspected	64
Representations with view to repairs necessary, or Closing Order to Local Authority	20
Closing Orders made	—

REPAIRS EFFECTED BY ORDERS ISSUED.

Overcrowding abated	2
Yard paving, repaired or repaved	5
New trapped gullies, to replace obsolete ditto	3
Vaults in bad state of repair or requiring emptying	4
E.C.'s repaired, new buckets, floors, etc. .. .	4
Windows not opening on top	3
Internal repairs, floors, etc.	6
Roof repairs	3
Scullery floors repaved or repaired	5
Limewashing and cleansing	3
Closets ventilated (windows provided)	4
Vaults disused and E.C.'s provided in lieu .. .	3
Additional E.C.'s erected	2
Drainage renewed or repaired	3
E.C. too near dwelling and removed	1
Additional window in living room, area of existing window not sufficient for efficient ventilation	1

All the above matters have been remedied and the works completed to the satisfaction of the Inspector.

WORKSHOPS AND WORKPLACES.

There are 65 workshops and workplaces in the district ; these are subject to frequent inspection.

No prosecutions have been necessary during the year.

The defects have been remedied by the owners or occupiers when given notice thereof by the Inspector.

The only factory in the district is the Whitehead Torpedo Works at Wyke Regis. This factory is under strict Government supervision, and at present employs about 1,200 men.

WORKSHOPS, ETC.

Inspections	..	..	..	..	53
Written notices sent	..	..	..	..	5
Verbal instructions to cleanse premises	..	..	..	..	4
Prosecutions	..	..	..	..	—

Defects found—

Limewashing of premises necessary	..	3
Cleansing of workshops	..	2
Removal of refuse and waste materials	..	4

SANITARY ADMINISTRATION STAFF.

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH AND SANITARY INSPECTOR.

The Sanitary Inspector works under the direction of, and reports to, the Medical Officer of Health.

LOCAL AND ADOPTIVE WORK.

These are few in number—

Building Byelaws.

Dairy and Cowshed Byelaws.

CHEMICAL WORK.

Waters analysed by the various companies, and samples are occasionally sent to the Clinical Research Association, and also by the Medical Officer of Health.

BACTERIOLOGICAL ACTS.

Specimens are sent to the Clinical Research Association, and also to the Medical Officer of Health of the Borough of Weymouth. Swabs from two cases of Diphtheria were examined with a positive result.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

GENERAL MEASURES OF INQUIRY AND PREVENTION.

In case of a notification of infectious disease, the home is visited without delay by the Medical Officer of Health, and enquiry is made as to possible contact, as to the milk supply, and, if in doubt, the dairy from which the milk comes is visited, the water supply and the sanitary arrangements are examined. If the child attends school, the school is visited, and the children sitting near in the class are observed. The child is carefully isolated at home or sent to the hospital, and at the end of the illness the rooms occupied by the patient are carefully disinfected.

Seventeen cases were notified, not including Tuberculosis, which is considered later.

Scarlet Fever	..	..	..	..	8
Diphtheria	..	..	..	..	5
Enteric Fever	..	..	..	..	2
Erysipelas	..	..	..	..	1
Ophthalmia Nematorum	..	..	..	..	1
					—
					17
					—

Of these the Scarlet Fever was very mild, at Chickerell and Broadwey. These were treated in the Isolation Hospital.

Enteric Fever.—An Osmington woman nursed her sister suffering from this disease in a distant county, and returning to Osmington became ill herself, and her daughter took it from her. Both were removed to the hospital, and eventually made a good recovery.

Diphtheria.—Five cases were men of the 3rd Dorsets and began in the camp at Lodmoor; those at the Reservoir camp were probably traceable to this outbreak. They were promptly removed to your Isolation Hospital, and the contact cases treated with antitoxin.

Of the notifiable diseases, Chicken Pox interfered with School attendance at Wyke Regis and Langton, and in November and December Chickerell suffered from Whooping Cough, and Wyke Regis Infant School was closed on account of the same disease.

MEANS OF DISINFECTION.

Rooms are fumigated by means of Formalin lamps, clothing and bedding by Carbolic Acid, Sulphur and Cyllin.

School-rooms are sprayed with a solution of Jeyes' fluid,

ISOLATION HOSPITAL.

The accommodation is good and sufficient.

Arrangements have been made with the Urban District Council of Portland for the joint use of the Isolation Hospital. It is hoped that such arrangements will work satisfactorily, and the cost of upkeep of premises and staff will be shared by both Councils, to the advantage of the ratepayers.

Four men of the 3rd Dorsets were placed in quarantine here on account of Diphtheria at the Upwey Camp in August ; and a few cases of Scarlet Fever and Diphtheria have been treated ; otherwise the hospital has not been much used.

I am sorry to report that our esteemed caretaker, Mr. Parkin, is lying seriously ill in the hospital, and requires a great deal of nursing himself.

TUBERCULOSIS.

Thirteen cases were notified during the year, ten of them being Pulmonary or Lung Tuberculosis, in the other three the disease affected some other organ of the body, *e.g.*,

Glands of the neck,
Skin,
Membranes of the brain.

The homes were visited by the Medical Officer of Health or your Inspector, disinfectants were supplied and instructions given, and also printed leaflets on "How to avoid spreading the infection to others."

Two cases died during the year, and their rooms and bedding were fumigated.

PREVENTION OF INFANTILE MORTALITY.

Much is being done by the better class of Midwives instructing the mothers in Infant feeding. Officers are appointed under the Infant Life Protection Act, 1908, to look after children, and children boarded out from the Union are under the supervision of ladies from the villages, who frequently report on them. The Infant mortality from this district is one of the lowest for many years.

VITAL STATISTICS.

Population estimated to the middle of 1914 ..	8,425
Birth Rate	17·4
Corrected Death Rate	11·2
Zymotic Death Rate	nil
Infantile Mortality (Deaths under 1 year per 1,000 births)	69·3
Average age of population at death	51·9

I regret that my Report is so late this year, but the exigencies of the War, and sickness in my home, are my excuse. I trust you will consider it a favourable one.

I remain, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

WILLIAM HAWKINS,

Medical Officer of Health.

TO THE CLERK TO THE
RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL, WEYMOUTH.

